

Dear Sarah,

When I was staying with Khun Sujin in Bangkok, on my way to Holland (in August), there was again an opportunity to listen to many useful reminders about awareness now, and opportunities to listen to Khun Sujin's radio program. There were also conditions for many good reminders about mettā in daily life, and of course mettā not without the development of satipatthana. Whenever the Buddha speaks about mettā, satipatthana is always implied, it has to be developed on and on and on. When we are helping someone else is there no seeing, no hearing, and can there be no awareness also while helping? What seems so ordinary, reminders about helping, is not so ordinary, because awareness is developed also while helping in order to see all realities as not self, no self who is helping. It just arises because of conditions, during the moments of javana cittas in the process of cittas, that is, the kusala cittas which arise in the process after there have been first vipakacittas and also cittas which are 'kiriya cittas'.

While we met at the airport it was about midnight. I had said I would take a taxi, but Khun Sujin insisted on fetching me, together with Khun Duangduen. She said:

People may think in an abstract way about the perfections of the Buddha (paramis), as being so great, but what about this hour or this moment? Can one spare a moment? Why does one think of the highest in one's life instead of spending a few hours with someone else?

Khun Sujin spoke about unselfishness developed together with satipatthana and then satipatthana will help one in seeing less the self. Those who follow the Buddha's teachings are a friend to all, that is true mettā. We should not expect anything from other people, but we should be kind instantly.

We talked many times about the object of paññā. What does paññā know? What appears now? There are six doorways. If one does not know what appears now there cannot be the development of right understanding. There is one reality which appears at a time, not more than one. There cannot be enlightenment without developing understanding right now. If one thinks: 'In the evening I will meditate and, then, I will become enlightened soon', it is only wishful thinking, clinging. It is clinging which always moves us away from the present object, as I heard on the tape you sent me. One may cling to the word 'calm', but instead of clinging to ideas it is better to consider more what the reality of calm is and what paññā is, and what paññā should know.

Do we know what seeing is? Or do we confuse it with thinking of shape and form? We may think that noticing three dimensions is seeing, but that is thinking. If there is no thinking, can there

be three dimensions?

Each reality has its own characteristic. Seeing is different from hearing and different from thinking, different from visible object. We often use the word characteristic (in Pali: lakkhana) . This term can be used in as : distinctive mark , visesa lakkhana, and ~~this is the case~~ as such it is used in the sense as I just explained above. But there is another way of using the word characteristic: samañña lakkhana, characteristic common to all, that is, impermanent, dukkha and anatta. These three 'characteristics' are common to all conditioned realities.

~~In order to know how to be aware~~ We should know that visible object is not sound, that seeing is not paying attention to shape and form. By <sup>getting to know the different realities</sup> ~~realizing the distinctive marks~~ which appear one at a time , not by thinking but by being aware right at the moment they appear paññā can begin to develop so that later on the true nature of them can be realized, the true nature of impermanence, dukkha and anatta, which are the characteristics common to all. Thus, ~~the task of paññā~~ what paññā should know is not merely: this is sound, different from visible object, this is seeing different from thinking. Paññā should realize the true nature of realities and only this can lead to detachment.

When we were discussing about nama and rupa Ivan was wondering why he was thinking of the hardness in the fingertips or in his legs . He was wondering what conditioned the thinking of the place where the hardness appears.

We think in this or that way because we have accumulated such thinking, we have been taught like that. Have we not been taught about the body ? Thus we are always inclined to think of our body, of the whole body. In reality all rupas which form up the body fall away in splitseconds, they never come back again. <sup>one</sup> rūpa <sup>which at a time</sup> appears <sup>can be</sup> as object of awareness <sup>it does not stay</sup> at a time, and ~~then~~ it falls away again. Khun Sujin asked Ivan whether he felt something heavy at his head? What we call a head is so heavy. Why don't we feel it? ~~xxxxxx~~ Rupas arise and fall away so fast, after they have arisen they are completely gone again. That is why we do not feel heaviness. We may think of a heavy head but that is just a story we think of, a concept. <sup>The head</sup> cannot be directly experienced.

Kamma conditions <sup>and they</sup> experiences through the five doors ~~which~~ are vipaka: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, the experience of touches. We sometimes think of the quality of such experiences and sometimes we think a 'story' about them, because we accumulated thinking in that way. If we think of hardness on the left side or on the right side it is also thinking, and this is different from the experience of hardness and different from awareness of it. We think 'My leg is there' , but rupas fall away and are completely gone. We keep on thinking of the whole body as my body , but this is wrong thinking. <sup>body</sup> does not exist.

There are realities appearing one at a time and they each have their distinctive characteristic (visesa lakkhana). How can paññā ever know their true nature, know them as impermanent, dukkha and anatta? This can only be realized in different phases, gradually, not at once. Realities should be known as nāma and as rūpa. Calling seeing nāma and visible object rūpa is not enough. Through awareness of them when they appear one at a time paññā may realize that seeing is only an element which sees, a reality which experiences visible object. Visible object is not A THING, ~~it~~ it is only what appears through the eyes, it is a reality which does not know anything. Awareness is not a matter of calling realities nāma or rūpa or thinking of them as nama and rupa. What then, one may ask. It is so hard to explain, because only in being mindful of one reality at a time paññā will ~~just~~ know them as only a nāma, as only a rūpa, different from a person, a self or a thing which exists. It is a kind of knowing with detachment from person, self, thing. First there has to be listening and considering of what one heard and this conditions right awareness of one reality and this again conditions the growth of ~~the~~ paññā which knows. It is all so much in phases, not at ~~once~~ once.

Ivan asked whether we can say that visible object is in the seeing. Visible object cannot go into the seeing. Seeing is only an element, which has no shape or form, no smell, no tangibility, Khun Sujin explained. Its nature is just experiencing an object. Whenever it arises it ~~experiences~~ experiences an object.

Some people like to point to visible object and say: visible object is out there and seeing is here, and they point at their eyes. Khun Sujin explained that if one points there is no development of right understanding, there is only thinking of concepts. There is no immediate awareness of the reality which appears if one thinks in the way of: visible object is there, far away and seeing is here.

Visible object and seeing, it may seem all vague. Until one begins to be aware of them. I said that there sometimes may be awareness of seeing, sometimes of visible object. Khun Sujin answered that one must be true to oneself whether one is already sure whether at a particular moment visible object appears or seeing appears. I said that I was not sure of course. Khun Sujin said that one needs 'study', that is, awareness of ~~the~~ the characteristics of realities. Then one will understand that we do not sit and talk with ~~a~~ ~~many~~ people. When there is seeing it is visible object which is there, no people. We take it for people, we are so used to think of people, but what is seen are no people. Although sitting is also a conventional term, we could say that we are sitting with visible object. Does that sound strange to us? In order to remind us Khun Sujin repeated :

One sits with visible object,  
 one stands with visible object,  
 one smiles with visible object,  
 one talks to visible object.

Thus one will understand the meaning of being alone. One is alone, there are no people. Does it sound rather crazy to us? But did we consider enough what we heard? We may complain about lack of sati, but the reason is that we did not consider enough the Dhamma we heard. These reminders occurred to me when I was about to be irritated with someone I was sitting with. I <sup>found</sup> ~~found~~ that ~~my~~ ~~experience~~ ~~is~~ I was not irritated with visible object, just colour. We think of person all the time, but we could start to consider realities more. Then we will be less absorbed in what others do or say.

We may think that we need to name realities nāma or rūpā when we think there is awareness. This is not so although it may be rather hard to understand. Nāma and rūpā <sup>can be realized as</sup> ~~are~~ conditioned realities. There is seeing arising, whether we like it or not, because there are other factors which condition its arising. Seeing is the result of kamma. There is seeing of pleasant things, there is seeing of unpleasant things and nobody can control the experience of objects to be pleasant or unpleasant. There is no self which sees and can control the seeing. It is only, only a nāma, an experience, which arises for a moment and then falls away. So it is with all nāmas. It is the same with rūpā, the reality which can be experienced, but which does itself not know anything. It is conditioned. I<sub>+</sub> is not a body, or a thing which exists. I<sub>+</sub> arises and then falls away. Now all this is first ~~understood~~ understood in theory, but it has to be considered often: what is the meaning of conditioned realities, of only a nāma and only a rūpā. When we consider the meaning there may be a little more understanding that they are beyond control and not somebody or something. We may see that when we think of a person or of the body we think of 'whole's', and that is different from being aware of just one reality at a time. But it is difficult to be aware of one reality at a time. When touching, do we realize when ~~my~~ the reality which experiences appears and when the tangible object? If we try to separate we will not know because there is thinking instead of immediate awareness, right at the present moment. All we heard about nāma and rūpā, may, after having considered it often, slowly 'sink in', and then there may be conditions for awareness of one reality, one nāma or one rūpā.

If there is awareness now of visible object, ~~my~~ it can eliminate the idea of I ~~am~~ see a person or I am ~~xxxxxx~~ talking to a person, an idea which is not at all reality. Khun Sujin stressed all the time that if one does not develop understanding by being aware one will not know the truth, it needs developing. One may remind oneself: what appears now, what sees? I<sub>+</sub> is a reality, not self which ~~does~~. Even the reminding is conditioned, conditioned by previous listening and it is good to realize this. When one relaxes and closes one's y

eyes one may also remind oneself: what reality is there now? There must be a reality, one reality. The test is in daily life; can it be developed in daily life, while playing scrabble or laughing with others? Such situations are like an examination. One may regret the lack of sati and that shows that there is clinging to sati. If there is no regret it shows that understanding is already more developed. I discussed with Khun Sujin the lack of sati and she said that there may still be some clinging to certain situations, although one has understood in theory that sati should be developed in any situation. There may be some idea of 'this situation is not good enough', although one does not realize that one has such an idea. One still may try to change one's situation, unknowingly. I said that I sometimes prefer a light magazine to the scriptures and K'un Sujin said: 'then ~~you~~ the choice has been made already, be aware of it.' No need to change anything and one will know one's real accumulations. Does one like to know? I<sup>1</sup> is good, because one will see how every moment of life is conditioned, no self who regulates. Thus, follow one's accumulations, follow the course of life. If one forces the course of one's life it hinders sati. Sati has to be developed in all the situations of one's life. I am inclined to think: 'Now <sup>people 'live' me</sup> ~~as I live~~, I want to go against the stream, I want to decide what I will do or not do'. But I may forget what is really important in life: to know realities now.

Blanche thinks one should slow down life and not hurry in order to be aware. Once I was with K'un Sujin in Thailand, visiting a meditation center where the ladies there said that they had to walk slowly in order to be aware. Khun Sujin made someone walk fast and asked whether it made any difference. She said that it made no difference. There may be lots of unawareness and sometimes awareness, no matter whether one hurries or not. If one still thinks that one has to concentrate on nama or rupa one may think that one should not hurry, but that is not awareness, only thinking.

When there is hardness one does not have to think, there can be right at that moment awareness of it, as only a rūpa, not a thing.

We may have a lot of concepts of how awareness should be and in what situations it should arise. So long as we are prejudiced there cannot be ~~REAL~~ ~~REAL~~ ~~REAL~~ real awareness, it hinders awareness. Awareness arises when one does not plan it, unexpectedly. It is incompatible with clinging.

I<sup>1</sup> is good to know the difference between thinking and awareness. When there are one, two or more people in one's life, there is only thinking, citta which thinks. T<sub>h</sub>is citta falls away. Where are the people? There is no person who is avaricious or unkind, it is only akusala citta which arises because it has been accumulated. If one realizes this one will be less inclined to judge others when one notices less pleasant qualities. Akusala arises and falls away immediately, it never comes back again.

With mettā, Nina.